

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

21 November 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR

25X1A

SUBJECT: Telephone Service for Mr. McCone on the White House  
Signal Switchboard

1. As you know, the White House Signal Switchboard (formerly called the White House Security Switchboard) provides certain telephone service to the Chairman and members of the Intelligence Board. Background information regarding this facility and its use by USIB, including a description of the CRASH elements of the system is contained in the attached document which is forwarded for information.

2. We wish to note in this connection that service on the White House Signal Switchboard is distinct from that which may be available to USIB principals through the normal White House switchboard (NAtional 8-1414) and requires a separate telephone instrument. In light of the special capabilities of the Signal Switchboard under certain emergency conditions, these instruments have been installed in the residences of the Chairman and members of USIB.

3. In order that arrangements may be made for Mr. McCone to receive service on the Signal Switchboard, will you kindly advise us with respect to his wishes on this matter, including as to when it will be convenient for the telephone instrument to be installed in his residence. On the basis of that information, we will then request the White House Signal Switchboard to effect the necessary installation.

Attachment

25X1A

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION REGARDING  
WHITE HOUSE SIGNAL SWITCHBOARD**

**General**

1. The White House Signal Switchboard is a telephone switchboard, manned by U. S. Army Signal Corps personnel, located in the White House and providing the President with expeditious direct communications with various agencies and individuals directly concerned with the national security.
2. Teams of these highly skilled Signal Corps technicians always accompany the President on trips. Therefore, the Chief Executive and Commander-in-Chief is never more than "the telephone away" from all subscribers and the rest of the world.

**Radio Phone Patch**

1. The Signal Board is equipped with phone patch facilities. By means of this equipment any White House vehicle or Presidential aircraft may, via radio, talk with any subscriber.
2. In the event a phone patch is placed to or from your extension, the instructions of the Signal Board operator must be carefully followed since the two-way car radios do not allow "break-in" operation.

**Conference Calls**

1. The Signal Board is equipped with conference facilities. By means of these facilities up to ten subscribers may be connected together for the purpose of conducting formal discussions via telephone.
2. The number of conferees should be limited insofar as is practical, since a large number of conferees plus long "line distances" may materially decrease the fidelity and volume of the transmitted voice signals.

**Crash System**

1. One position of the Signal Board is utilized for various emergency CRASH systems whereby the operator may ring all phones on a given system

simultaneously. This enables the calling party to talk to all subscribers on any system or combination of systems at once, or allows the operator to repeatedly transmit a prepared recording--such as an emergency warning--until all subscribers have answered.

2. The activation of a CRASH call will automatically cut off any conversation taking place over any of the affected phones.

Approved Circuit

1. An Approved (Secure) Circuit is one which has been approved for the transmission of classified matter in the clear.

2. The Signal Switchboard IS NOT EQUIPPED WITH APPROVED CIRCUITS. No classified information will be discussed over these lines either on a two-party or a conference call. On a radio phone patch, the names of individuals or other unclassified data of a "need-to-know" nature should not be mentioned.

Long Distance Calls

1. Long distance calls must be placed by the operator, for recording purposes, and not by the subscriber.

Instructions

1. To utilize Signal Switchboard service the subscriber should contact the Board by picking up the appropriate phone instrument in his residence or by dialing STerling 3-0333 (Government Code 1210) from other telephones, and give the Signal Corps operator the name or names of the persons with whom he wishes to speak. The Signal Corps operator, using all information at his disposal, will then attempt to make the necessary contacts. The operator will seek temporary forwarding addresses from the subscriber's home or will accept such addresses as are phoned into the White House Signal Switchboard in advance. The STerling telephone number for the Signal Board is unlisted and knowledge is generally restricted to subscribers and to a few selected members of their staff.

2. Signal Board phones are intended primarily as a means of direct emergency communications between the White House and the subscriber and should not be used for routine calls.